

GRANTEE MONITORING

Grantee Name	New Beginnings Family Services DBA First Choice Clinic
Location/Address	1755 Old West Main Street Suite 101 Red Wing, MN 55066
Date and Location of Site Visit	November 8, 2017 New Beginnings Family Services
Grantee Participants	Mandy Fleming, Executive Director Tami Connelly, Client Advocate
MDH Participant(s)	Mary Ottman
Grant Agreement #/PO #	0000286642 (Vendor ID)

PURPOSE:

In accordance with the MDH Policy 238.01 Grantee Monitoring, MDH will conduct at least one monitoring visit per grant period on all state grants of over \$50,000, and at least annual monitoring visits on grants of over \$250,000.

The purpose of the grant monitoring visit is to review and ensure progress against the grants' goals, to address any problems or issues before the end of the grant period and to build rapport between the state agency and the grantees. This visit may cover topics such as statutory compliance; challenges faced by the grantee, modifications made to the grant program, program outcomes, grantee policies and procedures, grantee governance, and training and technical assistance needs.

The findings or information obtained through this monitoring activity will be used:

- To ascertain how MDH program funds are being utilized
- To provide targeted technical assistance needs
- To improve program implementation performance
- To suggest other training needs
- In future funding decisions

OVERVIEW

1. Is the Grantee's non-profit 501(c) 3 status current?

Yes

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2. Does the Grantee have a central file containing the official records for this grant agreement and/or amendment?

Yes

3. Where is this central file located?

The contents are kept in a three ring binder that is filed in the locked file cabinet.

4. Who is responsible for this central file?

The Executive Director is responsible for the binder.

5. Does the central file include

- The grant proposal? Yes
- The award letter? Yes
- The signed grant agreement and any/all amendments? Yes
- Any/all requests and/or approvals for scope/budget changes? N/A
- The work plan? Yes
- Any/all payment requests (invoices)? Yes
- Any/all signed subcontracts? Not applicable (no subcontracts) Yes
- Any/all Progress Reports? Yes

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Does the organization meet all reporting requirements as outlined in the grant agreement and/or amendment?

Yes

2. Are expenditure reports submitted timely and accurately?

Yes

3. Are progress reports submitted with all required information and in a timely manner?

Yes

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CONTRACTUAL

1. Does the Grantee have written policies or procedures addressing use of contractors and/or subcontractors? [Yes](#)
2. Were any sub-contractors paid from the MDH grant required to sign a contractual agreement outlining services to be rendered, duration of engagement, and pay rate?
[Yes](#)
3. Was the contractual agreement(s) reviewed and approved by MDH before implementation?
[Yes](#)

PERSONNEL POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES OF THE GRANTEE

1. Are time distribution records (e.g., time-sheets) maintained to show how employees who are funded through, or contributed in kind to, the MDH grant and who work on multiple projects/programs spend their time?
[Yes](#)
2. Do personnel and/or payroll records show dates of hire/termination, immigration status if applicable, actual hours of time worked, leave time, federal and state programs worked on, and earning for all employees who are funded through, or contributed in kind, to the MDH grant?
[Yes](#)
3. Does the Grantee have policies and procedures in writing regarding:
 - Payroll? [See Pay-Check Policy](#)
 - Travel? [See Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses Policy](#)
 - Overtime? [See Overtime Policy](#)
 - Timesheets? [See Pay-Check Policy](#)
 - Taxes? [See Pay-Check Policy](#)
 - Purchasing? [See Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses Policy](#)
 - Compensated time off? [See Paid Time Off and Compensatory Time Off Policy](#)
4. Are employees time sheets approved?
[Yes](#)
By whom (what position)?
[Executive Director and the Board Treasurer](#)
By the Executive Director?
[Yes](#)

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5. Does the Grantee's payroll preparation and distribution involve more than one employee?

This task is performed by our Board Treasurer

6. Does an authorized official approve all checks before being signed?

Checks in the amount of \$250 or less are approved by the Executive Director. Checks greater than \$250 are approved by the Executive Board.

Additional Comments:

New Beginnings Family Services is a new grantee for the grant cycle 2016-19. They have done an excellent job at organizing and administering their grant funding with the Positive Alternatives program.

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PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS

Please use this space to answer all questions.

Program History

- When was your program started? Why was it started?
The Center was opened in 2006. The purpose of the program was to provide support to those facing an unplanned pregnancy. Originally this organization was initiated as a satellite center of Cannon Falls.
- What need does your program fulfill?
We help to meet the basic needs of those in crisis situations involving an unplanned pregnancy or parenting an infant. This includes education and material assistance.
- How has the program grown or changed since its beginning?
We continue to see an increased number of participants annually. With increased funding we have been able to provide more material items to our clients and expand the pregnancy and parenting curriculum we have to offer.

Grantee's Target population

- Who does the organization primarily serve?
Single Parents
- What is the program's demographic and geographic coverage?
Primarily unmarried, white females in their mid to late twenties
- Review recent Demographic reporting.
The majority of our clients are post-partum and fall in the 20-24-year bracket. We have seen a slight increase in the number of African American clients we are serving, and fathers.

Leadership and Governance

- Effective Board: How many board members currently serve, who are they?
We currently have eight members serving on our working board. Their professional experiences include, CPA, Physician's Assistant, Pastor, Medical Logistician, Educator, Early Childhood Specialist, accountant and an Industrial Laborer.
- How often do they meet? How are they informed of organization's progress and challenges?
The Board meetings monthly and holds an annual strategic planning meeting each February. They plan to use TLC resources for this planning session. The Director prepares monthly reports that are discussed at each meeting to keep the Board informed of

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organizational progress and challenges. The Director and the Board President also meet monthly, independent from the regularly scheduled Board meeting to prepare the agenda.

- How supportive is the Board of the program?

The Board is very supportive of the program.

- How is the program staffed? Who is responsible for the supervision of grant staff?

The program is staffed by the ED and two Client Advocates, with a combined total of 70 hours/ week. The ED is responsible for supervising all grant staff.

- How are staff evaluated on their performance? How long have PA staff been employed there?

Existing and all staff are evaluated annually in January. New staff members are evaluated 90 days after their start date, in addition to the annual evaluation. The ED has been employed here for 3 years, Client Advocate 1 has been employed here for 5 years, Client Advocate 2 has been employed for 14 months.

- How are staff background checks done?

Background checks are done prior to be hired.

- What is your organization's policy on complaints for staff and clients?

Staff members and volunteers sign a conflict resolution agreement and then follow the agreed upon steps if a complaint is filed. Clients request to file an incident report if they'd like to file a complaint.

Budget

- Does the current budget reflect your work plan activities?

Yes

- Is the budget accurate for the project size/scope?

Yes

- Do you have any challenges with the budget or invoicing?

Not at this time

- Has your Financial Reconciliation taken place?

No

- If you have an elevated risk designation, and/ or your Financial Reconciliation report cited any concerns, these will be discussed.

Medium Risk based on completion of Assurance and Agreement Form from 2016 application.

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Review Work Plan including:

Partners

- If applicable: how are people referred to the program? Are there any barriers encountered with referral sources? What is your most common referral source?
Internally, if clients receive a positive pregnancy confirmation, they are encouraged to participate in our EWYL program to 1. Help them understand gestational development of their baby, 2. Help them prepare to parent, and 3. Help supply them with necessary material items needed to care for their infant. Clients are most typically referred to this program by their peers and word of mouth. We also work closely with other agencies who serve a similar population and educators in the local schools. Barriers in regards to our referral sources included limited knowledge of the complete scope of the program. Typically, only relevant with peer to peer referrals. Existing and former clients are most common referral source.
- Challenges with partners or specific counties?
N/A

Work Plan

- Review your 2016 – 19 grant application's description of the program you are asking to be funded. On your work plan note the services and activities you said you would provide and the number of clients you would serve.
Car seat program: 2/ qtr., Crib Distribution and safe sleep: 10/ qtr., Life Skills: 8/ qtr., Nutrition: 12/ qtr., Parenting Edu: 25/qtr., Pregnancy Educaiton:25/ qtr., Necessary services: 12/ qtr., Necessary services none grant clients: 2/qtr.
- **Prepare a short summary of your current program(s) and the number of clients being served.** How does what you describe in the application compare with what you are currently providing? Have any programs and/or activities or services been added or removed? Have the number of clients being served per quarter decreased or increased since June 2016? Is there anything in particular you want to share about your current program to explain its current status?
We are on track with our EWYL program and the services described in our application have not changed. We have invested in upgraded curriculum and Spanish curriculum. Additionally, we have purchased curriculum outside of the distributor we typically use. Love & Logic, has been a wonderful addition to our curriculum selection. Clients seem to really enjoy the format and content. We have been able purchase new toys which seem to help keep the little ones distracted,

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which allows the parents to learn more easily. We are on track to give out 10K diapers in 2017. In 2016 we only distributed 6,500. We have not seen a significant increase in the number of clients being served, rather just a slow steady incline. This has been beneficial to us as it has allowed us to make shifts here and there to accommodate the program growth.

- Do you anticipate making any changes to the 2017-18 Work Plan? If so, in what way and for what reasons?

Not at this time unless recommendations are made the Grant Manager.

Participants:

- What type of outreach does the organization put into action? What is working well? What are more the challenging aspects to finding or retaining clients?
Outreach included working with the local schools and youth groups, partnering with other agencies who serve similar clients and have a presence by participating in community wide events and activities where our target market is likely to attend. It has served us well to work with other local agencies who serve the same target market. Having a constant presence in the community by being where the target market is has worked well for us. Incentives seem to be a big draw for getting new clients enrolled in our program. Once they see the benefits and develop a relationship with the Client Advocates, they seem to be committed to coming. Unfortunately, Red Wing has limited employment opportunities; we have had a lot of clients leaving the area in pursuit of better employment opportunities. Additionally, Red Wing has no flexible childcare providers so clients struggle with employment that requires them to work nights and weekends.

Data:

- How is program data collected and by whom? Is data collected useful to agency?
Program data is collected through various intake forms and questioners which are conducted at pre scheduled intervals. Information is collected by the staff member with a data collection service called, Way Cool, from the clients and recorded into our database. The data is useful in terms of identifying the demographics of our clients.
- Anything we can do to help or simplify data collection?

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I feel we have a good understanding of the expectations and are able to take appropriate measures to ensure we are collecting what is needed, in a manner that works for our center and staff.

Review Evaluation

- Your 2015-16 Evaluation Report Summary will be discussed (If you were a past grantee).
- Your 2016-17 Evaluation Plan will be reviewed. Any suggestions provided in your 2015-16 Report Summary should be included in the plan, if you are continuing a similar evaluation. If you are planning a new evaluation, details will be discussed. Do you have any questions on your evaluation? Year 1 – Safe Sleep programming was evaluated with minor revisions being made to the program. Year 2 will include an evaluation of the current Breastfeeding Program provided by a Nurse lactation consultant.

Miscellaneous

- Anything else you would like to share?
Thank you for taking the time to visit our center. We look forward to meeting with you.
- Anything else we haven't asked?
No

What can we do to help?

- Trainings and Grantee meetings useful for grantee? Any topic suggestions?
Social Media and Marketing to our target audience
Self-care/ staff retention
- Feedback or suggestions for the state?
None at this time
- Is there any way MDH can assist you to better equip your success in the Positive Alternatives Grant Program?

Summary:

New Beginnings Family Services (NBFS) is a new Positive Alternatives (PA) grantee for this grant cycle. The administration of a state funded grant was a new project for this organization. They have made good strides in the administering of their newly awarded PA funding. NBFS has received funding for the following programming: outreach, car seat education and distribution, safe sleep education and crib distribution, life skills education, nutrition, and pregnancy and parenting education.

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The organization has a great location in the heart of Red Wing and provides a warm and inviting office space. The PA grant provides funding for the partial or full expense of 3 staff for their client educational programming. In addition to the grant programming the organization also provides medical services of pregnancy testing, STI testing and ultrasounds.

Outreach efforts by NBFS have been fruitful for creating community awareness of their organization and increasing clientele. Currently the staff have initiated several efforts including a mail campaign, Face Book ads, making contacts with many community partners, development of brochures and printed materials and the use of their website. Staff have pursued a unique partnership with local public health for the education and distribution of car seats for those clients in need in their community. Training is given with the help of a certified car seat technician from the public health staff while NDFS provides the distribution of car seats to those clients who have completed the training from public health. NBFS is also a Cradle of Hope site and is able to provide pack n plays along with safe sleep education through this partnership.

Quarterly Update reporting was reviewed to verify the actual numbers of services that have been provided by this grantee. After a review of the reporting staff were able to better understand the data that is being requested for the reporting. Future quarterly reporting for NBFS should more accurately reflect the actual number of PA funded services that they are providing for their community.

No shows for scheduled appointment is a challenge for this grantee. While understanding the complications that may prevent clients from making some of their appointments, new ideas to reach reluctant clients are needed. It was suggested that some grantees are able to use text messaging as an appointment reminder successfully. Follow up calls are attempted for these no show clients.

NBFS has completed their first evaluation project successfully reviewing their safe sleep program. They have made some minor changes to their program based on their evaluation study. Year 2's evaluation plan will include the evaluation of their breastfeeding program offered by a staff nurse/ lactation specialist. They are excited about their newest evaluation project and look forward to the information they will be able to glean from their study.

NBFS has completed their first year as a responsible PA grantee. They have efficiently used their funding as they planned and stated in their work plan. Staff have also submitting all required reporting in a timely manner. I look forward to partnering with NBFS as a PA grantee for the remainder of the grant cycle and look forward to hearing of the continued impact and difference they are making in their community.

Date: November 9, 2017

Grant Manager: Mary Ottman